wink the Sultan and prevent the very resistance which afterward proved so disastrous. But at the last moment he refused. In consequence of his scandalous attempt to extort a bribe from the American envoys he was forced to resign his office soon afterward, and he then sought retirement to await results. There never was greed more dishonest than his, a life more licentious, nor a deceit more subtle; but at the same time he was the most adroit diplomat of an age devoted to diplomacy as a political power, and more familiar with the intrigues of courts and the aspirations of European dynasties than were any of his contemporaries, unless possibly Metternich, who did not become prominent until later. He was therefore indispensable, and was reappointed minister of foreign affairs. The great Laplace had been provisionally appointed minister of the interior; but so marked was his unfitness for the post that he soon was transferred to the senate and made way for Lucien Bonaparte.

But all this was little compared with the contemplated reconciliation with the Church for which the way was now carefully prepared. Pius VI had died a prisoner on French soil, and had been buried without honor. Befitting memorial ceremonies having been performed, the priesthood were released from the ban which the Jacobins had laid upon them. No oath in support of the new charter was required from the many priests who could not accept the civil constitution of the clergy, enacted in 1790; they could minister to their adherents without fear of persecution; they at once returned from exile or emerged from their hiding-places in large numbers. In the r61e of philosopher the First Consul professed to see the necessity of the Church as the main prop of a strong social organism and good government. As a far-seeing schemer he clearly felt that military